AN

APOLOGETICALL DECLARATION

Of the Conſcientious *Presbyterians* of the *Province* of LONDON, and of *many thouſands* of other faithfull, and *Covenant-keeping Citizens*, and *Inhabitants* within the ſaid City and Suburbs thereof.

Wherein their *firmneſſe* and *faithfulneſſe* to their firſt *Principles*, and to their *Solemn League and Covenant* is Conſcientiouſly declared; And the *Covenant-breaking* and *Apoſtacie* of *Others* is diſclaimed and abhorred before GOD and the whole World.

Januarie, the 24th, 1649.

Ezekiel, 17, 15, 18, 19.

Shall they proſper, ſhall they eſcape, that do ſuch things? or ſhall they break the Covenant, and be delivered?

Seeing they have deſpiſed the Oath, by breaking the Covenant (when as, lo, they had given their hand) and have done all theſe things.

Therefore, thus ſaith the Lord God, As I live, ſurely, mine Oath which they have deſpiſed, and my Covenant which they have broken, even it will I recompenſe upon their own heads.

Job, 22, 30.

The innocent ſhall deliver the Iland; and it ſhall be preſerved by the pureneſs of thy hands.

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To the READER.

COurteous Reader, It is prudentially considered and concluded on by the *Subscribers* hereof, that (seeing their reverend *Ministers Representation*, with subscription of their Names hath not taken that happie effect which was desired, nor stayed the hands of those to whom it was directed) therefore the publishing of their names that have subscribed to this *Apologeticall Declaration*, will, in like manner, do but little good, in that respect; And, therefore, although they are upon record to the honour of the *Gospel*, they are not, now, published; in regard of the present over-awing Power of the Sword; but may and shall in due time appear in publick, with more ample and (we hope) most satisfactory Demonstration of the just Reasons of this their present concealment. *Vale.*

WEE the *Subscribers* of this our *Apologeticall Declaration*, who desire to approve our selves sincere *Professors* of the true *Reformed Protestant Religion*, *Presbyterian Citizens* and *Inhabitants* of the honorable, and, lately, famous and renowned *City of London*, who have cordially adhered unto the *Parliament*, in its first and second War against the Kings Forces, for the defence of the true *Protestant Religion*, His *Majesties Person*, *Crown* and *Dignity*, the *Rights and Priviledges* of *Both Houses of Parliament*, and, in them, the *Laws* and *Liberties* of the Kingdom : Calling to minde our solemn engagements, not onely by our *Protestation*, *May*, 5th, 1641, but especially our *Solemn League and Covenant*, which was so religiously and unanimously sworn unto, *with our hands lifted up to the high and holy God of Heaven, that we would really, sincerely and constantly, through the grace of God, in our severall Callings, and with our lives and estates, endevour the preservation of them all*; Artic: 1, 2, 3, &c. And, being in our Consciences perswaded and assured of our indispensible obligation so to do, because most deeply engaged by our said *Covenant*, *not to suffer our selves*, *directly or indirectly, by whatsoever combination, perswasion, or terror, to be divided or withdrawn from that Cause which so much concerneth the glory of God, the good of the Kingdom, and honour of the King : But, all the dayes of our lives zealously and constantly to continue therein against all opposition.* Art: 6. And, whereas, by wofull experience, we are made very sensible of the dangerous *effects* of the *violation* of all our *Covenant-concernments*, and of the disappointment of our hopes of reaping the expected fruits of this defensive war, for which, we the *Subscribers*, have, many of us, adventured our lives, and most of us, our estates, in a measure, beyond our abilities, besides the Common Taxes that have been imposed upon us. And, though we cannot but with bleeding and trembling hearts complain that *our Cause* doth in these sad and perillous times in which we live, meet with such violent *opposition*, such mighty *lets* and *impediments* as we are not able to suppresse and overcome:

come: yet, considering with our selves, that what we cannot suppresse or overcome we are obliged to reveal and make known. *Artic: 6.* Being also moved with fear, lest in this time of imminent danger to all that is dear unto us, our *silence* should be taken for *consent*, and so contract upon our selves the guilt of betraying *Religion*, *King*, *Parliament*, the *Laws* and *Liberties* of this Nation; having also no other way left us to set our Consciences at liberty from the aforesaid guilt we might contract by our *sinfull silence*, in this juncture of time. We do, therefore, with all *sincerity*, *fidelity*, *zeal*, and *humility*, before the most just and righteous Lord of heaven and earth, make known unto all the three Kingdoms of *England*, *Scotland* and *Ireland*, to all the *Reformed-Churches*, and unto the whole *Christian World*, not onely the *dis-satisfaction* of our Spirits, at the *late* and *present transactions* of those who have forcibly assumed the *Supreme-power* into their own hands: But also do make this our following most solemn and serious *Apologeticall Declaration* for our *clearing* and *justification* from allowing or assenting to the *illegall actings* of these present times. And that we may also publish unto the world the grounds of these our most just exceptions and necessitated complaints herein, we declare, That, not onely, in *generall*, our righteous *Cause* before mentioned is perverted, deserted, apostatized, and fallen-from, by those who most injuriously and falsly reproach us with *Apostacie* for not associating with them, and bearing them companie in their unwarrantable wayes; But, also, in *particular*, that it is perverted, and abused in *every part* & *branch* therof. As first, in point of our *Religion*, which we are most deeply engaged by *Covenant* to preserve and reform in *power* and *purity*; Whereas in our own experience (confirmed by the *Parliaments* first *Remonstrance*, *Exact Collect:* pag. 4.) *Religion*, in its *purity* was greatly endangered, in the *Prelates* times in the *Doctrinall-part*, by the errors of *Popery*, and *Arminianisme*; and in *worship*, with superstitious *Innovations*: And, in our sad apprehension, the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel* is, now adayes, not onely more endangered through the increase of *Popery* and *Arminianisme*, but of most blasphemous *Antiscripturisme*, *Antitrinitarianisme*, *Antinomianisme*, *Socinianisme*, and many other such like heteredox *opinions*, and damnable *doctrines*: But also in point of *worship*, which, instead

500 instead of fear of corrupting, is, now, in great danger of absolute *Nulling*, by accursed opinions both against the very *being* of *Ordinances*, the *set-times* and *dayes* appointed by God for their *administration*; and even of the *Officers* and *Ministers* appointed by Jesus Christ, for their *dispensation*. Which doth the more sadly affect our hearts, and enforce this just *Declaration* and *Complaint*, because of that so eagerly endeavoured unwarrantable *Tolerating* of them all (except, in that subtil exception of theirs, of the open practise of *Popery* and *Prelacie*) as if it were *That Liberty of Conscience* which we have all this while engaged for; But, rather, against which, We do not onely protest, but contrariwise professe and declare that it was, onely, *a Liberty of Conscience from sin and error*, which we propounded in our *freedome* from our former *Egyptian Taskmasters* the *Prelates*.

In the next place, we further declare against the perverting of *our Cause*, in relation to the preservation of the *rights* and *Priviledges of Parliament*. For, although we were not able to preserve and defend them, when violated by that *unpattern'd and horrid force* upon the *House*, *Decemb: 6*, and 7, last, 1648; yet we conceive our selves obliged to Declare against it, and against the imprisoning and secluding so many of the faithfullest *Patriots* and *assertors* of the publick interest of the Kingdom; And also against the most insolent subversion and alteration of the *constitution* of the *Supreme judicatorie* of the Kingdom, consisting of the *Kings Personall* or *Virtuall Presence*, *Lords* and *Commons*, without whom (as we have been alwayes taught and informed) no Law can be enacted or repealed; The *confirmation* and *inviolable settlement* of which happie *Nationall constitution*, with its *preservation*, were the grounds of our *engagements*, and no *change* or *alteration* of the same: Whereas, now, to the unexpressible grief of our Souls we see a most strong and feirce *combination* in the *Generall* and *Armies Councell of Warre*, and *others* of their *partie* (set forth to the view of us all, in that *Modell* of theirs, called, *The Agreement of the People*, and presented to that which they call the *Parliament*, *January*, 20th, 1648.) utterly to subvert and overthrow the *whole frame* of our foresaid *Legall Government*, and to introduce and enforce upon us a most uncough, strange, and headlesse confused *Arbitrary* and *tyrannicall Government* of their own devising,

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and by a new as headlesse *Representative* of their own *compassing*; and yet all this while, (even whiles they are most violently endevouring to overthrow all our National Fundamentall Government, the very traiterous act for which the Earl of *Straford* and *Cant*: dyed, and which they now lay to the Kings charge to destroy him) most fallaciously and hypocritically they protest, and strugle to perswade us (as, in pag: 29th, of their said *Agreement of the People*) *that they are farre from any desire or thought to assume or exercise a Law-giving* (these are their own words) *or judiciall power over the Kingdom, or to meddle in any thing, save the fundamentall settling of that power in the most equall or hopefull way* (as they pretend) *for Common-Right and Safety; And this, they say, they humbly tender to us, to consider, and accept of, if we please*; Wheras, alas, we know, and *ancient experience* hath taught us to know, *That a Tyrants or Conquerors, Pray, is an irresistible, Command*; And this also is it, we thus justly complain of and declare against.

But, in the third place, in relation to our *engagement* by the *Sword*, and *Covenant* to defend and preserve our *Liberties* and *freedoms* (in this our, late, most famous and honourable *City of London*) according to Law; we are most heartily sorie for the too just occasion that we have to publish, and reveal the most evident *Perversion of our Cause* under this consideration also. For, whereas, to enjoy a *Propriety* in our estates, with a *freedome* from *Patents*, *Monopolies*, *Ship money*, and other illegall *Impositions* and *Taxes*, the *liberty* of our *persons* from unlawfull *arrests* and *imprisonments*, contrary unto *Magna Charta*, our freeborn *English Spirits* were raised (for their *preservation* and *defence*) most freely and even prodigally to lay out our persons and purses: We are, now, not onely in danger of *intolerable slavery* instead of *freedome* and *liberty*, according to Law; But, to have our *Franchises* and *Priviledges*, as *Freemen of this City* voted and rent from us. The deep wounding thoughts whereof do so affect and peirce our hearts, that we cannot any longer forbear mournfully to complain, and Declare, That, since the 7th of *December* last, we are not onely deprived of our *Freedome* and *liberty* to make choice of *such Common Councell-men*, who have all along approved themselves, to God, the *Parliament*, and *City*, men faithfull in their trust; they being, now, made uncapable of being chosen thereunto,

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unto, because of their *honest Activity* for the *Personall-Treaty*; And that, by an *Ordinance* made after this supposed crime was acted. And, now, as a sad fruit of it, through many *Common-Councell-men* most illegally and forcibly chosen, in part of a *Common-Councell*, is passed a *Petition*, which, at best, shews the *framers* and *promoters* thereof, onely to minde *Earthly things*, not a word of any religious or *heavenly concernment*, being once mentioned in it; And, it is intituled, *The Petition of the Commons of the City of London:* Which is not onely a foule injurie and blemish unto the truly religious and cordiall *Commons* thereof; but fills us also with fear of future sore breaches of our *Franchises*, and *City-liberties*, if not to the totall *subversion* of the *whole frame* of the *well-constituted* and long experienced *good Gouernment* of one of the most glorious and renowned *Cities* in the Christian world. All which most injurious irregularities we cannot choose, as *Citizens*, but with ineffable greif of heart, here, Declare and complain of, being in conscience obliged hereunto, even by the *Oath of Freemen*; viz: *The Franchises and customes of this City you shall maintain.* So that, whereas, we fought for the *defence* of our *liberties* by Law, that our *English Spirits* might not be intimidated or beslaved by the Kings designe of bringing in of *Germane-horse*: We are, now, so farre from seeing any *sure Foundations, for our liberties* and *freedome*, according to Law, that we look upon our selves in exceeding great danger (upon that *Common plea* of the *Army*, *Necessity*) to be miserably subjected to *Martiall-Law*, instead of being ruled by the *Municipall-Law* of the Kingdom.

Ex: & Collect. p. 5.

And yet, as if nothing should be wanting to make us *completely miserable*, and *exquisitely to pervert our Cause* throughout; When both *King* and *Parliament* were in an hopefull way not onely of being reconciled, but of settling the Kingdome in a way that would have answered, (in some competent measure, for the present) the expense of our *blood* and *treasure*, and our *Covenant-engagement* also; we are now, not onely disappointed in our hopes thereof: But, His Majesties *Royall Person* (the *defence* and *preservation* whereof, though so carefully provided for, by the many *Declarations* of the *Parliament*, the frequent *Proclamations* in our streets by the beat of the Drum, at the beginning of these Wars, by our *Protestation May* 5th, 1641, and by our

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Solemn League and Covenant; yet, as if the end of our engaging with the *Parliament* had been for the *ruine* of the *Kings person* and *regall Authority*) His Majesties *Person*, we say, is not onely in extreme danger, by being exposed unto a *Tryall* without warrant either from the *Word of God*, or the *Laws of the Land*: But also is thereby plunged into such a *nature* and *condition*, as is altogether derogatorie to and inconsistent with the *Kings Honour*, which we professe in our *Covenant*, is the 3d part of our *Cause*, for which we engaged. *Artic: 6.* That the *world*, therefore, (to whom we appealed, when we entred into *Covenant* to preserve and defend the *Kings Majesties Person, and authority*, in the *preservation* and *defence* of the true *Protestant-Religion*, and *Liberties* of the Kingdom) yea the *Lord God himself*, *Angels* and *Men*, may bear witnesse with our Consciences, that we have no thoughts or intentions (nor ever had) to diminish His *Majesties just power and greatnesse*, and that we the *Subscribers* hereof are not *Covenant-breakers*, but do utterly dislike and disavow the present proceedings against him, either to the taking away of His Majesties *Crown*, much lesse his *life*, the very thought whereof we from our souls detest and abhor; We do, hereby, most freely, faithfully and plainly discharge our *consciences*, and do testifie our *loyaltie* unto the Kings Majestie according to the duty of our allegiance, expressed in the foresaid *Protestation*, *May*, 5th, 1641, and the *Solemn League and Covenant*. And we do, hereby, further declare, that when we so cordially concurred with the *Parliament* at first, in the *opposition* of the Forces raised by the King (seduced by *evill Counsellors*) as we propounded the *preservation* and *defence* of our *Religion*, *Parliament*, *Laws* and *Liberties*: so, also, to preserve, and not to ruine the *Kings Person*; but, mainly *to remove the wicked from his throne, that so it might be established in Righteousnesse to Him and his royall Posterity*; But, we say, not to pluck Him out of it, and to bring him to an *Arbitrary-tryall* for his life, both in respect of his *Judges* and their *Law*.

In summe, therefore, we have (in all these most weighty respects) too great and just cause to be extraordinarie sensible, that the bringing of the King (the *Head* of the *Common-wealth*) to a *tryall* for his life, before an *arbitrary* and *illegall power*, warranted by *no Law* of God or Man, and the most strange, irregular

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and unparallel'd *proceedings*, and contemptuous *carriages* toward His Majestie, The putting down of the *House of Lords*, and, The restraining of so many *eminent Members of* Parliament, by the *General Councell of Officers* in Arms, *against all Laws* of God and Man, the known *priviledges of Parliament*, the *liberties of the Subjects*, and their *justification* of all these *exorbitances*, in print, instead of *Repentance* and deep *humiliation* for the same, is but a sad *prologue* to the ensuing *slavery* and *ruine* of all the *Free-born Subjects* of this Realm: For, if the *Head* and most eminent *Members* of the *Common-wealth*, legally to be protected from *violence* and *tyranny*, by so many *Oaths*, *Covenants*, *priviledges*, *Laws* and *Engagements*, be thus *tyrannically* and *barbarously*, already, insulted over, and trampled under feet, like *dust in the streets*, by an imperious *Military power*; We, who are inferior to them in all respects, and not invironed with so many *priviledges* and *protections*, cannot but most justly fear and expect far greater *insolencies* and intolerable *pressures* to be unmercifully exercised on us by them, when these *pillars* and *foundations* are not onely thus *shaken*, but even quite *removed* and *set-by*; According to our Saviours own words. *Matth.* 10. 25. *If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more wil they call them so, that are of his household?* In sad and serious consideration hereof, therfore, we say, again and again, we cannot possibly keep silence, though it be an evill; nay, because it is so evill a time: But, as, *professors* of the true reformed *Protestant Religion*, which teacheth no such *Doctrines*, as these fore-mentioned, and as are, *now adayes* so unblushingly practised, in relation to the *Kings Majesty*, and to the rest of his *free-born Subjects*, without any respect, or least distinction to their *places* or *qualities*; That we may, as much as in us lyes, wipe-off that foul *blot* and scandalous *stain* that will (otherwise) inevitably fall upon *Religion*, by this most horrid *breach* of our *Covenant*, especially in relation to our King; that *professors* of the *Gospel* in other Kingdoms may not also suffer by being cast out of *royall protection*, for the sin of some (pretended) *professors* among us; And, that we our selves (when the approaching *Earthquake*, which is like to be in the three Kingdoms by fearfull commotions and endles wars, & inevitably like to attend the intended *deposure*, or *violent death* of our *Soveraign King*, sadly falls upon us)

us) may not have *outward misery*, and *inward guilt* to meet together, *without* and *within* us, even our *Consciences* flying in our faces, for our (at least seeming) *consent* unto it, by our *sinfull silence*; But that we may (in the *singlenesse* and *sincerity* of our hearts) wash our hands and clear our *innocencie* in the sight of God and the whole Christian world: We do not onely, in generall, make this our just *Apologie* that we are far from the *approving* of the *breach of our Covenant* in any part or branch of it; But, in *particular*, in reference to that of the Kings *Person*, so clear and innocent, that we do declare our *Detestation* and Souls *abhorrency* of that most *disloyall action*; conceiving it to be *such a sin*, as Men must create a *New Name*, for, and God a *New Hell* or *punishment* for it.

And, thus, now, having (in the unfeined *sincerity* of our hearts) witnessed a good *Confession*, as in the sight of God, and Men; not from a factious, seditious, vain-glorious, or peevish *Spirit of contradiction*, or in the least tinctured vile *malignity*, or *apostacie* from the *common cause of Religion*, *Liberty* and *peace* of the Kingdom; Though we fear not *persecution* (for righteousnesse sake in being true to our principles) from those who have power, now, in their hands: yet, not knowing whether by Gods *permissive providence*, *Satan may not cast some of us into prison* for, thus, setting our *Consciences* at *liberty*; We therefore commit our Souls, in this our *well-doing*, unto God, as unto a *faithfull Creator*, hyding our selves under the *shadow of his wings*, till these *calamities* be over past, and looking unto Jesus, who hath assured us, *That whosoever shall forsake houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife or children, or lands for his Name and Truths sake, he shall receive an hundreth fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.* We have therefore hereunto subscribed our Names with our hearts and hands.

FINIS.